



Jonah 3, 4

Then the Lord spoke to Jonah..."Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh, and deliver the message of judgment I have given you."

This time Jonah obeyed the Lord's command and went to Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all. On the day Jonah entered the city, he shouted to the crowds: "Forty days from now Nineveh will be destroyed!" The people of Nineveh believed God's message and from the greatest to the least, they decided to go without food and wear sackcloth to show their sorrow.

...The king and his nobles sent this decree... "Everyone is required to wear sackcloth and pray earnestly to God. Everyone must turn from their evil ways and stop all their violence. Who can tell? Perhaps even yet God will have pity on us and hold back his fierce anger from destroying us."

When God saw that they had put a stop to their evil ways, he had mercy on them and didn't carry out the destruction he had threatened.

This change of plans upset Jonah, and he became very angry. So he complained to the Lord about it: "Didn't I say before I left home that you would do this, Lord? That is why I ran away to Tarshish! I knew that you were a gracious and compassionate God, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. I knew how easily you could cancel your plans for destroying these people. Just kill me now, Lord! I'd rather be dead than alive because nothing I predicted is going to happen."

The Lord replied, "Is it right for you to be angry about this?"

Then Jonah went out to the east side of the city and made a shelter to sit under as he waited to see if anything would happen to the city. And the Lord God arranged for a leafy plant to grow there, and soon it spread its broad leaves over Jonah's head, shading him from the sun. This eased some of his discomfort, and Jonah was very grateful for the plant.

But God also prepared a worm! The next morning at dawn the worm ate through the stem of the plant, so that it soon died and withered away. And as the sun grew hot, God sent a scorching east wind to blow on Jonah. The sun beat down on his head until he grew faint and wished to die. "Death is certainly better than this!" he exclaimed.

Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?"

"Yes," Jonah retorted, "even angry enough to die!"

Then the Lord said, "You feel sorry about the plant, though you did nothing to put it there. And a plant is only, at best, short lived. But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, not to mention all the animals. Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?"

Living Our Mission

1. Our mission is _____

"Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh'... **Jonah entered the city**" (3:1,2,4)

2. Our message is both huge & _____

"Nineveh, a city so large that it took three days to see it all." (3:3)

"**Forty days** from now Nineveh will be destroyed!" (3:4)

3. Our obstacle is _____

Do I doubt _____?

"The people of Nineveh **believed** God's message from the greatest to the least" (3:5)

Am I _____?

"this **change of plans upset Jonah** and he became very angry." (4:1)

Am I clinging to _____?

"the Lord God arranged for a leafy plant to grow...shading him from the sun... and Jonah was very grateful for the plant. But God also prepared a worm!...Then God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry because the plant died?" (4:6-9)

Do I lack _____?

"You feel sorry about the plant... But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness...**Shouldn't I feel sorry for such a great city?**" (4:10-11)

Have I forgotten _____?

"For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may **bring salvation to the ends of the earth.**'"

(Paul in Acts 13:46 quoting God' mission for Israel in Isaiah 49:6)

4. Our reward is _____

"The people of Nineveh believed God's message...When God saw that they had **put a stop to their evil ways** he had mercy on them and didn't carry out the destruction" (3:5,10)